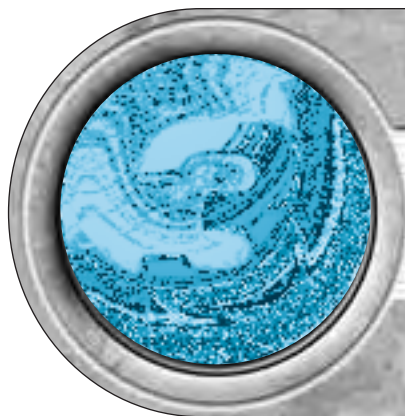




TEENS ON A MISSION

Details, Details, Details

January 15, 2011

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

1 Timothy 4:11, 12 (NIV) • “Command and teach these things. Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.”

Philippians 3:7-9 (NIV) • “But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.”

Romans 4:19-21 (NIV) • “Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.”

Romans 8:37-39 (NIV) • “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who

loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Genesis 18:18, 19 (NIV) • “Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.”

Joshua 24:14, 15 (NIV) • “Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

1 Kings 2:1-4 (NIV) • “When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son. ‘I am about to go the way of all the earth,’ he said. ‘So be strong, show yourself a man, and observe what the Lord your God requires: Walk in his ways, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may

prosper in all you do and wherever you go, and that the Lord may keep his promise to me: 'If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.'"

1 Corinthians 16:15, 16 (NIV) • "You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it."

Ephesians 4:11-15 (NIV) • "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ."

James 1:2-6 (NIV) • "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind."

(See additional passages in student material.)

B. WHAT'S TO BE SAID ABOUT "TEENS ON A MISSION"

Most teens are dealing with the changes of adolescence while at the same time trying to determine their mission on earth. It's not uncommon for teens to wander without a true North. Much of a teenager's journey is an examination of the values, goals, and attitudes that will shape their future.

This lesson seeks to empower teens by giving them tools to develop and clarify their own personal mission statement that reflects their deepest convictions and an enduring sense of purpose. The Christian church has always held high hopes for teens and their potential to do great things for God. Amid a bombardment of distractions and an enemy that seeks to derail them, teens can steer through the confusion if they have a clear, strong, personal sense of their mission in life. The task of shaping and following through is entirely theirs, but others can engage them with thought provoking questions and some helpful pointers so that they make the most out of their life today.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "TEENS ON A MISSION"

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Discern the value of living by well thought-out principles.
2. Develop a mission statement that reflects their core values and goals.
3. Encourage others to be guided by goals that have eternal outcomes.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) index cards or slips of paper, pens or pencils; (Activity B) two water bottles, two small clear cups or glasses, two buckets of sand.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons, handout on pp. 38, 39.

Applying • Paper, pens or pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Ask them which verse they chose to learn from Wednesday's portion of their lesson. Give them an opportunity to say their verses from memory.
2. Give the students an opportunity to "quote" themselves, using what they wrote in the Monday portion of their lesson. Be sure to debrief them about any quotations that might not reflect the Christian life accurately. However, quotations of this nature do not occur in every lesson.
3. Review responses that they and others made to the scenario that was posed on Sunday. Discuss the variety of responses, ending with thoughts from last week's What's to Be Said About . . . in the teacher lesson.

If you have a very large group, have adults available to process this section with smaller groups of students.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adult* at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word. At some point you

should distribute or call their attention to their student lesson for this week.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • The goal of this exercise is to get students to trade items so they can accomplish their task. There are four groups and four tasks:

- Organize and coach a soccer team of 10-year-olds
- Sell lemonade on a street corner
- Run a 1,000 kilometer dogsled race in Alaska
- Paint a widow's house

The students are to trade away the items that seem least useful to accomplishing their task for things that others possess. They are to continue trading until each group has enough resources to finish their task. (Note: This is not a competition or monopoly.)

Get set • Write each of the following items on an individual piece of paper or an index card.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| > Pylons | > Global Positioning Device |
| > Box of lemons | > Dog food |
| > Poster board and pens | > Cell phone |
| > Whistle | > First-aid kit |
| > Plastic pitchers | > Paint rollers/brushes |
| > Chair | > 10 gallons of chartreuse paint |
| > Permission slips | > Tape |
| > Sugar | > Drop cloths/tarps |
| > 10 to 20 Alaskan Malamutes | > Pressure washer |
| > Soccer balls | > Cash box |
| > Ice | > Screwdriver |
| > Dogsled and harnesses | > 12-inch flat wooden stick |
| > Air pump and needle | > Bottled water and oranges |
| > 10 gallons of water | > Access to a grassy field |
| > 1 month's supply of dehydrated food | > Portable table and chair |
| > Band Aids | |
| > Paper cups | |
| > Water purification pumps | |

Write the four tasks on separate cards and assign each group a task or have them randomly

draw a card. Explain the instructions, and then have each group draw eight cards from the stack that contains the list of necessary tools.

Go • After all of the cards have been distributed, each group will need to trade their useless stuff for necessary stuff. Listed below are a few tips for each group.

- Organize and coach a soccer team of 10-year-olds. You will need to keep in mind that you are responsible for their safety and well-being in addition to teaching them how to play soccer and have fun.
- Sell lemonade on a street corner. It is your responsibility to collect everything you need to sell lemonade on the corner of a street.
- Run a 1,000-kilometer dogsled race in Alaska. While many things would be ideal, what do you need to complete the race safely?
- Paint a widow's house. It's not an impossible task, but you need to get the house painted in a way that's an improvement.

Debriefing • Ask: What trades were obvious? What trades could have gone either way? Explain. When trading with another group, did you think the trades were mutually beneficial? What are some choices we have to make about living out our own personal mission in life? What worship songs or hymns do you think speak to this issue of letting other things go to obtain the things you really need.

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate the principle of being deliberate with your life goals. There are two goals for this exercise: (1) fill a small clear cup or glass with water and (2) keep a simple sand castle (wet sand poured into a pail and turned over will suffice) moist without damaging it. Both tasks must be completed using a spray bottle (with various nozzle settings).

Get set • Divide the students into two groups, taking one volunteer from each side. The rest of

the students can cheer for their respective volunteer. The two spray bottles should look identical; however, one bottle should be on the spray setting while the other one should be on the stream setting. Ask the volunteers to choose their spray bottle (without using it of course). After they've made their choice, inform them that they cannot tamper or change their spray bottle during the course of the exercise. However, if you want to emphasize how we need to adjust our lives to accomplish certain goals, then allow them to adjust the settings on the bottles. Also, designate an appropriate distance that each volunteer must stand away from each task.

Go • Begin with the glass-filling task. The volunteer with the bottle set on the stream setting will complete the task faster, since the bottle on spray setting will simply send mist into the air instead of directing a steady stream of water into the glass. The point will be clear that the focused stream of water is more effective for filling the glass. However, the roles will be reversed with the next exercise. The bottle on spray setting will be able to keep the sand castle moist without damaging it, whereas, the bottle on stream setting will create small holes in the sand castle, therefore damaging the castle's smooth edges.

Debriefing • Ask: What kinds of adjustments were needed to fill the glass? Moisten the sand castle? (turn the nozzle) Can you think of different approaches to reaching others that require similar adjustments? (Some require a more gentle approach, others more forceful.)

Share in your own words: Another way to describe the difference between being random and being deliberate is the analogy of a shotgun blast versus a rifle bullet. A shotgun shoots hundreds of tiny pellets in a pattern, spreading out over a long distance and spraying a large area but having little impact. On the other hand, a rifle bullet is a single, solid piece of lead that can hit a target, making an impact even from long distances.

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story:

The story is told of a sharpshooter who terrorized a small town by taking target practice on cars, buildings, benches, and large trees throughout the town. Each night dozens of shots were heard, and in the morning the locals would find red targets painted all over town with a single bullet hole in the very center of the target. The people were very frightened. Finally the FBI was called in to investigate and capture the sharpshooter. However, the FBI was puzzled. How could someone be this good of a shot? After following some leads, they caught the perpetrator and discovered just how talented he was. It turns out that the culprit was a much better painter than he was a sharpshooter. His scheme involved firing a shot at an object and then painting a target around the bullet hole.

Many people go through life just like that “sharpshooter,” with no real direction or purpose. While this approach to life may seem easy, it’s an empty way to live. People without direction often drift from one thing to another without ever accomplishing or reaching a goal. Being clear about your target and then making every decision in light of it is how great people meet their goals.

Debriefing • Ask: Why do you think it’s important to have direction and purpose in your life? What is your purpose on this earth? What goals have you set for your life? How do you plan on reaching your goals? What was Christ’s direction and purpose? How did He stay focused on His goal?

4 **CONNECTING**

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

Every citizen of the kingdom of God, at one point or another, discovers the need to clarify

their purpose in relation to the King. If we are going to be true citizens of the kingdom of God, we need to know what our place is and what our purpose is. While there are some basic goals of the Christian life, God has enabled every believer with the potential to live deliberately for His cause. As we have seen, trying to do as many things as possible doesn’t necessarily further God’s kingdom. As a matter of fact, the Bible alludes to the need to let some things go in order to accomplish the “goal” Christ has called you to.

Have volunteers read the following passages and answer the following questions:

What did they let go of? What did they grab onto? **Acts 6:1-7; Mark 8:34-36; Matthew 13:44-46.**

Ask: What other stories or sections from the Bible depict this theme?

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath’s portion of the lesson.

Ask the students to form pairs and discuss the story and the significance of thinking carefully through our goals and decisions. Give the students a few minutes to formulate some answers before directing their attention back to a group discussion. **Ask:** To what degree is paying attention to detail important to being a mission-minded person?

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Share the following thoughts in your own words:

After being impressed at a weekend retreat to become a full-time missionary overseas, 16-year-old Benjamin shared his conviction with his pastor. Ben was so on fire he wanted to quit school and jump on any plane heading overseas. His pastor didn’t want to quench Ben’s excitement, but what should the pastor say? What should he affirm? How can he guide Ben to a realistic mission for his life?

Each of us needs to come to a clear sense about who we are and what we should do for God. Typically, as a teenager you are taught, whether openly or by implied behavior, that your calling or mission in life has to do with your career or something you do later in life. In truth, it's in your teenage years that you shape your own values that define the course of your life. Now is the time to begin your mission statement! How? Start by looking at what God says about His desire for your future.

Copy and distribute the handout on pages 38 and 39.

Say: The following activities and questions are designed to help you develop your personal mission statement. In the lesson handout there is a list of "you are" verses from the New Testament, describing what God thinks of you and hopes for you. If God were to write your mission statement, it might have some of the same language as these verses. Look at these verses and answer the questions at the end of the handout.

After students share with each other have them report to the group any insightful things they heard or learned.

Before beginning to write an actual mission statements, have the students look through the What Are They Trying to Say? section in the student lesson.

Ask: What insights are there about becoming a person with a clear mission in life? What quote really inspires you to think about your purpose in the world?

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Share the following ideas in your own words:

In Acts 2:42-47 and 4:31-35 we sneak a peak at a band of believers who are dead set on a mission. Imagine what it would be like to be a

teenager in that church? What roles do you think someone like you might have? What would a church like the church in Acts look like today?

Organizations are not the only ones with mission statements. We as individuals can also develop a mission statement to guide us through life. In pairs or a group think of someone you know who lives their life by a clear purpose. While you may not know their "mission statement," what are they all about and what would their mission statement sound like based on what you see in them.

Say: A personal mission statement has three parts. Who am I and what is my life about? What do I believe in most and what am I willing to take a stand for? What am I going to do about what I believe and what I am willing to take a stand for?

Use the How Does it Work? section in the student lesson to get students to begin writing out a preliminary mission statement. Give students some time to answer the questions, reminding them that this is just a first draft.

As the teacher, you might develop your own mission statement to share with the students. In addition, you might even ask a few of your faithful students to be ready to share theirs with the group, hopefully inspiring the other students to complete their own statements.

Debriefing • Ask: What was helpful about answering those questions? To what degree have you thought about this topic before? What do you think is harder: becoming clear about your mission in life or mustering the courage to live it out daily? Should a mission statement lean more toward being idealistic or realistic? What do you think?

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think mission statements might be helpful to individuals in the church?
2. Based on the information you have so far to use in a mission statement, what can you do this week to begin to live your life by your mission?

3. If you were to pray for anything this week in regard to owning your own mission, would it be: insight/wisdom or confidence/boldness?
4. How can friends be helpful to each other in living out their mission?
5. Find a partner in your Sabbath school or a classmate in your school with whom you can share your mission and who will help keep you accountable.
6. Is there someone older you can ask to help you remember your commitment to your mission? Ask them to check on you weekly and to pray for you.

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

Some scoff at the notion of getting focused and writing a mission statement, but every successful business, organization, or movement has one that is well thought out. The process of asking those important questions about who you are and what matters to you is probably the most important part of your journey. But making a clear statement is only half of the equation; living by it is just as important. Listen, my friends: We desperately need young people to become clear about what God is calling them to be and to do. Let me just remind you what the old guy, Paul, said to the young guy, Timothy (who was a young person when he first started working with him):

“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12, NIV).

Whether young or old, we all have the ability to take an active role in the kingdom and in the church. By setting clear goals and following a mission, each of us can assist the church in bringing people to Christ.

FOR LESSON THREE:

THIS HANDOUT IS FOR THE CONNECTING TO LIFE ACTIVITY.

Matthew 5:13 (NIV)—"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men."

Matthew 5:14 (NIV)—"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden."

Matthew 10:29-31 (NIV)—"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."

John 13:35 (NIV)—"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

John 15:14, 15 (NIV)—"You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."

1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 (NIV)—"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple."

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIV)—"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."

2 Corinthians 3:3 (NIV)—"You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of

the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."

Galatians 3:26-28 (NIV)—"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Galatians 4:7 (NIV)—"So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."

Ephesians 2:19-22 (NIV)—"Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."

1 Thessalonians 2:10, 11 (NIV)—"You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children."

1 Peter 2:9, 10 (NIV)—"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy."

HANDOUT FOR CONNECTING TO LIFE ACTIVITY, CONTINUED

After looking at what God thinks about you and your future, carefully answer the following questions and share them with a partner.

1. Which verses really spoke to what I feel confident about in myself?

2. Which verses really spoke to what I hope to become?

3. Which verses were hard to believe?

4. Which verses are essential for a Christian to believe?

Although you may not know where you will be in five years or what you will be doing, take a few minutes to think about your future by answering the following questions.

In five years:

1. What character qualities do I want to possess?

2. What experiences do I want to have experienced?

3. What do I want to be good at?

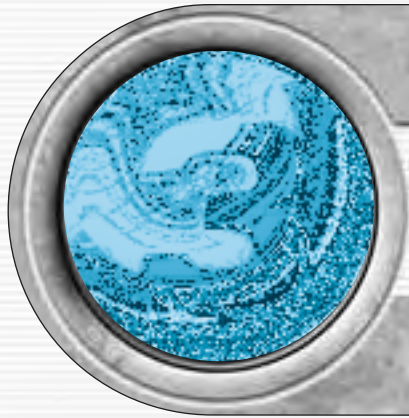
4. What do I want my friends to say about me?

5. What experiences do I want to avoid?

Now that you've thought about the future ask yourself:

1. Will my present course get me there?

2. What needs to change?



STUDENT LESSON

TEENS ON A MISSION

Details, Details, Details

January 15, 2011

>>KEY TEXT: Choose one of the texts from Wednesday's portion of the lesson. Write it here and memorize it this week.



DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS

(What connection do you think the following illustration has with the Bible texts on the other page?)

It was 1911, and explorers were attempting to travel to the uttermost parts of the world. Two teams set out to be the first in history to journey to the South Pole (Antarctica). The glaring dissimilarity between the two teams was their approach and preparation for the journey, which in the end made all the difference in the world.

One team was led by Roald Amundsen, who rigorously studied the travel methods of the Eskimos and others who traveled in similar climates. After careful study and reflection he determined that the best way to reach the South Pole was to travel by dogsled. Next he picked a team of skilled skiers and set reasonable goals for each day, making sure the dogs would have plenty of food and rest. His careful planning enabled the team to reach their goal without any

major disasters. In fact, the only incident that his team encountered was an infected tooth that had to be extracted.

Unfortunately, the other team, headed up by Robert Falcon Scott, had a completely different experience. Scott, a British naval officer who had led a previous Antarctic expedition, did not thoughtfully plan out his expedition, as is displayed by his choice to use motorized sledges and ponies for the journey. Problems started soon after the expedition began. The motorized vehicles failed after five days, and the ponies, who had never experienced such bitter cold, had to be killed at the base of the Transantarctic Mountains. After the ponies were gone, Scott's team had to drag the heavy sledges around and were sapped of their energy.

To make matters worse, their clothes were not appropriate for the weather, causing many team members to suffer from frostbite. In addition, the team became blinded by the snow because of inadequate goggles and eye protection. If that weren't enough drama, the food and water ran low as a result of Scott's poor planning and last-minute addition of a fifth person to the team. Amazingly, Scott's team made it to the South Pole alive, but in bad shape. And there, waiting for them, was the Norwegian flag. Amundsen, because of his thoughtful attention to the details, had accomplished his goal and reached the destination one month sooner than his counterpart.

It pays to pay careful attention to the details that will help us accomplish our goals.



Sunday

HERE'S WHAT I THINK

The mission statement of a fictional spaceship goes like this: "These are the voyages of the starship *Enterprise*. Her continuing mission is to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no one has gone before."

If you were to personally use the structure of that statement to describe your purpose in life, what would you change, and how would it read?

Keeping the basic structure and themes of the statement above, how would a mission statement for your church (or your dream church) read? Try to make it 30 words or less like the one above.

Log on to www.guidemagazine.org/rtf to post your responses. Be up-front and honest. Say what you think.



Monday

WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO SAY?

Different people, different opinions. Some of the quotations below represent the views of true kingdom citizens; others may not. Can you tell the difference? How do these statements compare with what God is saying in His Word? After reviewing the texts in the God Says . . . portion of the lesson, write a statement that captures your belief. Be prepared to quote yourself at Sabbath School.

>>"Our greatest fear should not be of failure, but of succeeding at something that doesn't really matter."—*New Tribes Missionary (unknown)*, *Eternal Perspectives Newsletter*, Fall 2003, p. 15.

>>"No steam or gas drives anything until it is confined. No life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated, disciplined."—*Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 20th-century U.S. clergyman.

>>"I have found my destiny. I must take the gospel to the people of the East End [of

London]."—*William Booth*, 19th-century English Methodist minister, founder of the Salvation Army.

>>"If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live."—*Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 20th-century African-American pastor, Nobel Peace Prize winner.

>>"First build a proper goal. That proper goal will make it easy, almost automatic, to build a proper you."—*Goethe*, 18th-19th-century German poet, playwright, thinker.

>>"No one can be making much of his life who has not a very definite conception of what he is living for."—*Henry Drummond*, 19th-century Scottish evangelist, minister, writer, professor of theology.

>>"If you chase two rabbits, both will escape."
—*Unknown*.

Write your own quotation.

WHAT I SAY IS . . .



Tuesday

SO WHAT?

Most people are eventually forced into focusing their life on the things that matter most as a result of serious problems arising, such as cancer or financial difficulties. Trial by fire is one approach to finding a focus and purpose; however, it might not be the best way to spend your time on earth. The story of Blind Bart is a great example of someone straining out anything that gets in the way of their goal, and leaping out to obtain it. In **Mark 10** a blind man named Bartimaeus is sitting by the road when he hears that Jesus is passing by. He cries out to Jesus, but he gets shushed by the crowd. Determined not to let the opportunity pass, he cries out louder, and Jesus stops and calls him to come. The blind man sheds his cloak, leaps into the air, and makes his way to Jesus. Amazing. Nothing got in the way of his goal. His reward—Jesus

healed him and taught each of us a life lesson about focusing on what we want out of life.

Why wait until you're desperate and you have no other options? Why not live by principle today? Why not be driven by your mission, making every decision based upon your values? Why not live each day for the things you would be willing to die for? It's as simple as showing compassion for outsiders who can't get in, loving your neighbor with tangible grace, or empowering missionaries to spread the gospel in India by working a few hours after school. Whatever your mission is, be the kind of person who is guided by a true north. Take the challenge of navigating the waters of your teen years with a clear sense of who you are and what you are destined to do.



Wednesday
GOD SAYS . . .

>>Proverbs 21:21 (NIV)

"He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor."

>>Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV)

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

>>Acts 20:22-24 (NIV)

"And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."

>>Romans 8:18, 19 (NIV)

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed."

>>Philippians 2:1, 2 (NIV)

"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tender-

ness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose."

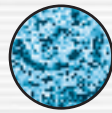
>>Philippians 3:12-14 (NIV)

"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

>>Colossians 2:2, 3 (NIV)

"My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

(More: 2 Timothy 1:8-12; Hebrews 6:9-12.)



Thursday
**WHAT DOES THIS
HAVE TO DO WITH ME?**

As bright and complicated as Paul could be, he kept his mission simple: "My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (**Colossians 2:2, 3, NIV**).

As we grow older, our mission is shaped by new ideas and new experiences. It seems clear when we read the Gospels that Jesus calls His followers to do incredible things to further the kingdom. But what is also true is that we are not alone. Jesus is right behind us, helping us become everything He has intended us to be.

Jesus believes in you and can empower you to make bold choices for Him. More than anything else, He wants you, as a child of His kingdom, to experience the joy that comes from being free to



1. What is my life about?
2. What do I stand for?
3. What action am I taking to live what my life is about and what I stand for?



